

We claim:

1        1. A system for providing information to a user connected to a data network, the  
2        system comprising:

3              a database for storing information;

4              a server associated with the database and having an information module, the  
5        information module responsive to a search request signal and sends information from the  
6        database corresponding to the search request signal; and

7              a first station for initiating voice conversation with a second station, the first  
8        station having a playback module for playing information stored at the first station and a flow  
9        controller for determining an amount of bandwidth available to receive information from the  
10      database and responsively affecting the receiving of information from said database.

1        2. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first station includes means for receiving  
2        personal information from a user and sending the search request signal based on said personal  
3        information.

1        3. The system of Claim 1, wherein while the first station coupled for  
2        communication with the information module, the flow controller monitors the amount of  
3        bandwidth available to receive information from the database.

1        4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first station has means for determining  
2        whether the information received from the database is properly received.

1        5. The system of Claim 1, wherein the database stores the information in  
2        predetermined categories that the server uses for searching for information corresponding to  
3        the search request signal.

1       6. The system of Claim 5, wherein the search request signal from the first station  
2 contains a code associated with at least one of the predetermined categories.

1       7. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first station includes means for storing  
2 information received from the database and means for playing at least a portion of said  
3 information at a designated time.

1       8. The system of Claim 7, wherein the first station plays at least one portion of the  
2 information before establishing a communication channel between the first and second stations.

1       9. The system of Claim 8, wherein the first station receives information from the  
2 database after establishing the communication channel between the first and second stations.

1       10. The system of Claim 1, wherein the playback module streams the information  
2 received from the database.

1       11. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first station is a telephonic device and can  
2 establish a communication channel over a packet-switched network.

1       12. The system of Claim 1, wherein the information is advertisements.

1       13. The system of Claim 1, wherein the information is a plurality of music  
2 programs.

1       14. The system of Claim 1, wherein the information is a plurality of stock quotation  
2 information.

1       15. A first station for providing information to a user connected to a network, the  
2 first station comprising:

3           a user interface for allowing a user to interact with the first station; and  
4           a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of programming modules  
5           including a call initialization module, a playback module, and a flow controller, wherein the  
6           call initialization module initiates voice communication with a second station, the playback  
7           module plays information received at the first station, and the flow controller determines an  
8           amount of communication bandwidth available to receive information at the first station and  
9           responsively affecting the receiving of the information at said first station based on the amount  
10          of bandwidth available.

1           16.    The first station of Claim 15, wherein the flow controller monitors the amount  
2           of communication bandwidth available to receive information from a server while the first  
3           station is in communication with the server.

1           17.    The first station of Claim 15, wherein the playback module streams information  
2           received at the first station.

1           18.    The first station of Claim 15, further comprising an error controller for  
2           determining whether information received at the first station is properly received.

1           19.    The first station of Claim 18, wherein in response to determining the  
2           information was not properly received at the first station, causing said information to be resent  
3           to the first station.

1           20.    The first station of Claim 15, wherein the storage medium providing storage of  
2           information received at the first station before playback.

1           21.    The first station of Claim 20, further comprising a memory manager for  
2           managing a memory allocation of the storage medium.

1        22. The first station of Claim 15, further comprising a code module for receiving  
2 personal information from a user and sending a code associated with the personal information  
3 to a server.

1        23. A method for providing information to a user connected to a data network, the  
2 method comprising the steps of:

3                establishing a communication channel between a first station and a server, the  
4 server associated with a database;

5                identifying information to send to the first station from the database;

6                determining an amount of communication bandwidth available between the first  
7 station and the server; and

8                receiving information at the first station responsive to the amount of  
9 communication bandwidth available between the first station and the server for providing to a  
10 user.

1        24. The method of Claim 23, further comprising the steps of:

2                storing the received information at the first station having a memory; and  
3                providing the received information to the user at a designated time.

1        25. The method of Claim 23, further comprising the step of establishing a  
2 communication channel between the first station and a second station.

1        26. The method of Claim 25, wherein the step of receiving information at the first  
2 station occurs after the step of establishing a communication channel between the first station  
3 and the second station.

1        27. The method of Claim 25, wherein the step of receiving information at the first  
2 station occurs before the step of establishing a communication channel between the first station  
3 and the second station.

1        28. The method of Claim 25, further comprising the steps of:  
2                terminating the establishing of the communication channel between the first and  
3        second stations and performing the step of establishing a communication channel between the  
4        first station and a third station if said first station sends a connection request to establish the  
5        communication channel with the third station.

1        29. The method of Claim 25, further comprising the steps of:  
2                prior to performing the step of establishing a communication channel between  
3        the first and second stations, determining whether the first station sends a connection request to  
4        establish a communication channel with a third station; and  
5                terminating the establishing of the communication channel between the first and  
6        second stations and performing the step of establishing the communication channel between the  
7        first and third stations if said first station sends the connection request.

1        30. The method of Claim 23, further comprising the steps of:  
2                receiving personal information at the first station from a user; and  
3                receiving the personal information at the server.

1        31. The method of Claim 30, wherein the step of identifying information to send to  
2        the first station is responsive to the personal information received at the server.

1        32. The method of Claim 31, further comprising the step of determining whether  
2        personal information was already received at the first station from the user.